

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 CAB-09 COME-00 DOTE-00 EB-11 FAA-00 OMB-01

DRC-01 SAM-01 /112 W

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R 240850Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2114

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 6833

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, JA, TW, ETRN

SUBJECT: JAPAN-TAIWAN COMMUNICATION IMPASSE

REF: A) TOKYO 5976 B) TOKYO A-325 C) TAIPEI 2981

D) HONG KONG 5430 E) TAIPEI 6507 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: IN LIGHT OF "COMMUNICATIONS GAP" BETWEEN
JAPAN AND TAIWAN EVIDENT IN CIVAIR ISSUE, FONOFF IS
CONTEMPLATING MEANS FOR UPGRADING ITS CONTACT POINTS
WITH TAIWAN, PERHAPS THROUGH NAMING PRESTIGIOUS
EX-AMBASSADOR TO HEAD EXCHANGE ASSN IN TAIPEI. FONMIN
OHIRA TOLD DIET HE DOUBTS AIR TIE BETWEEN TAIWAN AND
JAPAN CAN BE STORED WHILE CURRENT ATMOSPHERE
PREVAELS. FONOFF SEES OHIRA'S POSSIBLE RESIGNATION
(IN CABINET/RESHUFFLE/ RUMORED AFTER UPPER HOUSE ELECTIONS)
AS HELP IN RENEWING AND IMPROVING COMMUNICATIONS WITH GROC.
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END SUMMARY.

1. EMBASSY HAS LEARNED THAT FONOFF, AS PART OF POST MORTEM ON NEGOTIATIONS CULMINATING IN CIVAIR AGREEMENT WITH PRC (REFS A AND B), IS TAKING LONG, HARD LOOK AT GOJ CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION WITH GROC. EVEN ADMITTING PROFOUND POLICY DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GROC AND GOJ ON CIVAIR ISSUE, FONOFF IS CONVINCED THAT MORE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS MIGHT HAVE FORESTALLED GROC DECISION TO SEVER AIR LINK WITH JAPAN. FONOFF CHINA DIV DEP HEAD OGURA RECENTLY CITED TO EMBOFF SEVERAL EXAMPLES OF HOW COMMUNICATIONS BREAKDOWN AFFECTED COURSE OF NEGOTIATIONS. ACCORDING TO HIM, GROC REPEATEDLY FAILED TO RESPOND TO EARLY GOJ INITIATIVES TO OPEN DISCUSSION OF AVIATION QUESTION (WHICH PARTICULARLY EXASPERATED FONMIN OHIRA). WHEN CHANNELS TO "OLD JAPAN HANDS" SUCH AS SENIOR ADVISORS CHANG CHUN AND HUANG HSIAO-KU ALSO APPEARED TO BE CLOSED, GOJ DECIDED TO SEND HIGH-RANKING, PRESTIGIOUS SPECIAL EMISSARY. FOR THIS TASK THEY SELECTED FORMER AMBASSADOR TO US USHIBA, WHO HAD BEEN CLOSE FRIEND AND COLLEAGUE IN WASHINGTON DAYS OF THEN GROC AMBASSADOR TO US CHO SHU-KAI. BUT CHOW, DESPITE HIS OWN RELATIVE FLEXIBILITY ON CIVAIR ISSUE, DECLINED TO SERVE AS A CHANNEL TO CHIANG CHING-KUO (CCK). ON TAIWAN END, OGURA SUSPECTS THAT CCK ISOLATED SELF FROM ADVISORS EXCEPT FONMIN SHEN AND MADE HIS DECISION IN ISOLATION, THEN ANNOUNCED HIS DECISION TO AN INTIMIDATED CABINET. OGURA SAID ONLY CHANNEL WHICH REMAINED OPEN THROUGHOUT EXERCISE WAS THROUGH EXCHANGE ASSNS, BUT EXCHANGE ASSNS LACKED POLITICAL CLOUT AND ENTREE TO EFFECTIVELY DEAL WITH AVIATION QUESTION.

2. GOJ IS ANXIOUS TO OVERCOME COMMUNICATIONS GAP WITH TAIWAN AND TO RESTORE AVIATION RELATIONS. OHIRA ADDRESSED ISSUE IN DIET MAY 15 AND NOTED THAT PRESENT ATMOSPHERE WOULD HARDLY PERMIT RESUMPTION OF DIALOGUE. CONFIRMING PRESS SPECULATION, OGURA SAID OHIRA'S RESIGNATION FROM FOREIGN MINISTRY, POSSIBLE IN POST-ELECTION CABINET RESHUFFLE, COULD EASE WAY FOR RENEWING CONTACTS WITH TAIWAN, ALTHOUGH HIS RESIGNATION WOULD PROBABLY NOT IN ITSELF BE SUFFICIENT TO RESTORE

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AVIATION RELATIONS. WHETHER IN FACT OHIRA WILL LEAVE FONOFF IN RESHUFFLE, OR STAY ON IN THAT POSITION, IS SUBJECT OF SEPTTEL.

3. FONOFF BELIEVES JAPANESE EXCHANGE ASSN IN TAIPEI SHOULD BE UPGRADED AND GIVEN POLITICAL CLOUT, AND PLANS TO REPLACE CURRENT HEAD ITO. (REF C). OGURA SAID FONOFF IS FOLLOWING US EXAMPLE WITH USLO AND HAS PREPARED A LIST OF "PRESTIGIOUS EX-AMBASSADORS" AS POSSIBLE REPLACE-

MENT. THUS FAR, DESIRABLE CANDIDATES SEEM TO BE
RELUCTANT TO TAKE POST USUALLY BECAUSE OF INVOLVEMENT
IN OTHER ACTIVITIES. OGURA SAID THAT BECAUSE OF
EXPANDED RELATIONS WITH PRC, FONOFF CURRENTLY HAS NO
POLITICAL OFFICERS AVAILABLE WHO COULD BE APPOINTED TO
TAIPEI AND THUS ITO'S REPLACEMENT IS ONLY CHANGE
ENVISAGED NOW.

4. OGURA VOLUNTEERED NO INFO ON POSSIBLE REPLACEMENT
OF MA SHU-LI (REF C) AND EVEN COMMENTED THAT MA WAS
A "SENIOR REPRESENTATIVE" AND MEMBER OF KMT CENTRAL
COMMITTEE WITH TIES DIRECTLY TO CCK.

5. COMMENT: DESPITE CLAIMS HERE AS ELSEWHERE THAT
OHIRA WAS CALLOUS IN HIS TREATMENT OF TAIWAN, EMBASSY
BELIEVES OHIRA AND GOJ ORIGINALLY WANTED AND EXPECTED TO
ACCOMMODATE MINIMUM INTERESTS OF GROG, THOUGH OF COURSE NOT
AT PRICE OF FOREGOING CIVAIR AGREEMENT WITH PRC.
HOWEVER, AS NOTED IN REFS A AND B, GOJ SUFFERED FROM DEGREE
OF SELF-DELUSION CONCERNING LIKELIHOOD THAT GROG COULD EVER
BE PERSUADED TO ACCEPT OHIRA'S SIX-POINT PROPOSAL. IN
ANY CASE, CURRENT FONOFF PLANNING INDICATES GOJ INTENDS
TO WORK AT PROBLEM OF REESTABLISHING AT LEAST CHANNELS
FOR TALK WITH GROG; AND EVENTUALLY IT HOPES TO RESTORE
AIR LINK.
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